

VZCZCXRO3098
OO RUEHBC RUEHCHI RUEHCN RUEHDE RUEHDT RUEHHM RUEHKUK RUEHLH RUEHPW
RUEHROV
DE RUEHJA #0041/01 0091024
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 091024Z JAN 09
FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1189
INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS COLL PRIORITY
RUEHUNV/USMISSION UNVIE VIENNA PRIORITY 0210
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 1006
RUCNISL/ISLAMIC COLLECTIVE
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 5818
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 3499
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 1561
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 2586
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 5316
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 2940
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 3412
RUEHHK/AMCONSUL HONG KONG 3228
RUEHBAD/AMCONSUL PERTH 1402
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RHHJJPI/USPACOM HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 JAKARTA 000041

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EAP, EAP/MLS, EAP/MTS, EAP/RSP, NEA, NEA/IPA
NSC FOR E.PHU

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/09/2019

TAGS: [PREL](#) [KISL](#) [ID](#) [XF](#)

SUBJECT: GAZA -- INDONESIAN CIVIL SOCIETY WEIGHS IN

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires a.i. John A. Heffern, Reasons 1.4 (b+d)
)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY AND REQUEST: Charge met with thirty Indonesian religious and civil society leaders at their request for a wide ranging discussion of the situation in Gaza on January 9. Indonesian interlocutors noted concern for the humanitarian situation in Gaza and called on the United States to press for an immediate ceasefire. They delivered an open letter to the President-elect with this message. Charge reaffirmed USG commitment to a lasting peace built on a two-state solution. Views expressed in the meeting reflected a pragmatic approach to the issue that most Indonesians support. Mission requests Department's assistance in delivering a copy of the letter to the transition team. END SUMMARY AND REQUEST.

¶2. (U) Charge acceded to a request by Indonesian religious and civil society leaders to come to the Embassy for a discussion of the situation in Gaza on January 9. Din Syamsuddin, Chairman of the mass-Muslim organization Muhammadiyah, led the group. It included leaders of Indonesia's Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, and Muslim communities as well as academics, political party officials and artists. The group had met with the UN Resident Coordinator on January 7 to urge that the world body press for a ceasefire in Gaza.

REQUEST FOR DEPARTMENT'S ASSISTANCE

¶3. (U) The group presented an open letter to the President-elect that called on the United States to help bring about peace between Israelis and Palestinians. The letter was signed by 20 of the members of the visiting group. (The text of the letter is in paragraph 8 below.) The original will be pouched and a scanned version sent electronically to EAP/MTS. Mission requests Department's assistance in delivering a copy of the letter to the transition team.

POSITIVE TONE

¶4. (U) In opening remarks, Charge said Indonesia's commitment to the free and peaceful expression of political views made this dialogue possible. He reiterated the United States' commitment to building a lasting peace in the Middle East and noted that the President and Secretary of State had repeatedly called for the creation of a Palestinian state living side by side with Israel in peace and security. He praised Indonesia's support for the Palestinian Authority, the Quartet and the Annapolis Peace Process.

¶5. (U) Charge said the USG was deeply concerned about the situation in Gaza but cautioned that a ceasefire must be a step toward a durable peace, not merely a restoration of the status quo ante. He reiterated USG belief that a ceasefire must guarantee Israel's security and halt Hamas rocket attacks. Charge noted that the Secretary had described the latest UN Security Council resolution on Gaza, which passed just before the meeting began, as a step toward a sustainable, durable peace in Gaza.

¶6. (U) Syamsuddin said Indonesians of all faiths were united in their concern regarding the Palestinian issue. He underscored the matter was not a religious conflict but a political one. Implicitly recognizing Israel's right to exist, Syamsuddin expressed support for a two-state solution. He called on the United States to "pressure" Israel to bring about that outcome. Syamsuddin also underscored the importance of the humanitarian situation in Gaza and urged the United States to help alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian people.

JAKARTA 00000041 002 OF 003

REPRESENTATIVE OF INDONESIAN VIEWS

¶7. (C) The views expressed in the meeting reflect the opinions of most Indonesians. They remain deeply concerned about the plight of the Palestinians, especially during the ongoing Israeli military operation in Gaza. The meeting was free of one-sided condemnations of Israel and reflected a practical acceptance of Israel's right to exist. While a small number of extremists here have called for Indonesians to fight on the side of the Palestinians, most Indonesians share the generally pragmatic approach to the issue expressed by these leaders.

LETTER TO PRESIDENT-ELECT OBAMA

¶8. (U) BEGIN TEXT OF LETTER:

DON'T LET THE WORLD DOWN!
An Open Letter to President-Elect of the United States
His Excellency Barrack Obama

Jakarta, 9 January 2009

His Excellency Barrack H. Obama
President-Elect of the United States of America
Washington, DC

Dear Mr. Obama,

Warm greeting from Indonesia!

First of all, please allow us - leaders of Indonesian civil society organizations - to take this opportunity to wish you a Happy New Year. The 2008 has been a memorable and historic year, not only for you personally and for the United States, but also for all of us around the world. Your election as the President of the United States has brought great hope around the world about a new America, a changed America, and an America that would cherish and abide by the ideals of justice, freedom, equality, and harmony.

We are aware of the challenges you will be soon facing as the US president after the inauguration on 20 January, especially

at the domestic fronts. The challenge of managing the leadership transition, and the great task of restoring the American economy, would demand your utmost attention and energy. We realize that providing jobs to millions of Americans and restoring domestic and international confidence in the US economy would occupy the highest priority of our presidency.

Your Excellency,

We are confident that America is not a selfish nation. We are convinced that America, despite its internal challenges and problems, would never abandon its obligation and responsibility to the international community. We have a great hope that America would once again be willing to return to the tradition of exercising a global leadership role in a just and responsible manner in order to create a peaceful global order characterized by equality, mutual respects, and freedom. We believe that deep in their hearts Americans would wish to see their country standing up against any injustice, oppression, and inequality in every corner of the earth.

The plight of millions of Palestinians should never escape your attention and the attention of millions of Americans. For decades, millions of Palestinians - especially women and children - have been living in fear and injustices. For decades, Palestinians have been enduring the terrible impacts of oppression. For decades, the Palestinians have been struggling to restore their dignity as a sovereign nation free from any oppression from outside forces. For decades,

JAKARTA 00000041 003 OF 003

millions of Palestinians have been yearning on those values of justice, equality, and freedom.

Their struggle for peace has become more difficult in the face of current military offensive by Israel. The aggression by Israel in Gaza has brought about a great humanitarian tragedy. Hundreds of innocent civilians - especially women and children - have been killed. We should never allow thousands others to lose hope in a better future. We should prevent the prospect for a sustainable and genuine peace in the Middle East from becoming even more remote. We should avert any possibility that the current crisis in Gaza would serve as a source of global tension among nations and among civilisations.

Your Excellency,

For those reasons, we would like to make an appeal to you to devote your attention and energy to this issue, we urge you to use your influence to restrain Israel and put pressure on the country to respect humanity and abide by UN resolutions and International laws. Israel needs to be warned that force would never solve any problem and it would in fact escalate the conflict into a wider scale. As a global power, the US must exercise its influence to resolve the Palestine-Israel conflict. This should be done by, first of all, putting pressure on the Government of Israel to immediately resort to ceasefire, in order to make space for further peace efforts.

We encourage you to immediately play a decision role in bringing peace to the conflict between the two nations. We hope that you and your government place a paramount important to the resolution of the conflict by making a two states solution a reality. We hope America would work with other peace-loving nations to ensure that Palestinian-Israeli conflict be resolved once and for all, so that the two nations could live side-by-side in perpetual peace.

We believe that a historic moment is awaiting you. There is a great deal of hope and confidence around the world that under your leadership and commitment, peace in the region could be closer than what we imagine. That, however, would require a sustained effort on your side; an effort guided by a just, genuine, unbiased, and decisive determination and leadership role.

Your Excellency,
Great opportunity does not come very often. We believe that a golden opportunity is now with us. We urge you to seize that opportunity and work to bring peace to millions on Palestinians and Israelis, and indeed to the world at large. Billions of citizens of the earth is waiting for an America that could be remembered and respected as a great peace-making nation.

Finally, on behalf of millions of Indonesians, we wish you a successful presidency and look forward to your leadership in bringing America back to the family of peace loving community of nations.

Sincerely yours,
Leaders of Indonesian Civil Society Organizations

END TEXT OF LETTER.

HEFFERN